

# On the Trail

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF EL DORADO NATURE CENTER FRIENDS & VOLUNTEERS

## Behind the Scenery . . .

An Allen's Hummingbird landed on a slim branch of the cotoneaster tree just outside our office window one day recently. The bird moved about strangely, pivoting and turning about, head bobbing back and forth. At first we wondered if it was sick, but then noticed the twig where it perched was becoming thickened ever so slightly; pilfered strands of silk from spider webs could be seen stretching to other nearby branches. It then dawned on us that we were witnessing the framing of a new nest! Each day the swelling on the twig grew until the base of the nest began to take shape. What a miraculous and precious sight to witness: a tiny bird small enough to fit inside a child's palm creating a masterpiece from fiber, web, and sap.

All of us who work at the El Dorado Nature Center feel privileged to witness the secret weavings of nature's way, whether it's the first threads of a hummingbird nest or an ochre hued mushroom newly burst free from the soil by the winter rains. But being close to nature is a privilege and a right of all human beings. It is our goal to bring this gift to others and is what keeps our spirits up and our hope for the future nurtured in these times of almost daily crises.

Since our last newsletter, we have faced many new challenges and budget uncer-



*The hummingbird babies fledged from the nest soon after this photo was taken.*

tainties. Through it all we still count among our blessings the beauty of the lakes and trails of the Nature Center and the smallest of the creatures and the largest. You may have noticed our smaller island bridge has a fresh coat of paint, a new uniform surface making it more ADA accessible. This project was funded by an anonymous donor to the *Friends of El Dorado Nature Center*. We continue to look for other grant opportunities for major renovations and hope that our stream restoration project will be reinstated through funds from the Federal Stimulus Package. Our dedi-

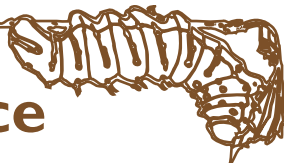
cated staff members are committed to sharing their love and passion for the natural world with all who come to the Center and they strive to instill in others an awareness and concern for the environment we share with all living things. The wildflowers and native shrubs that our volunteers planted are in their full glory and we continue to pursue the goal of transforming the Nature Center's grounds to a fully native landscape.

And by the way, we got to watch the entire life cycle of that hummingbird nest. Once the eggs were hatched the mother fed the nestlings every 15-20 minutes. They grew very quickly and within another two weeks they were as large as their mother. Finally one day the first hatchling sat on the edge of its nest, flapped its wings for what seemed like just a few minutes, and was gone. The lone bird left behind stayed a few more days, still being fed by its mother, and then it too took off and the cycle began again. After witnessing something like that, you wonder what could possibly top it? Come visit your Nature Center and we guarantee there will be something new to give your spirit a lift. Just ask our Visitor Center staff, they'll be happy to share what's happening.

— Donnie & Meg

Volunteering Opportunity —

## Summer Super Science



Do you want to help dig in the pond, find a nest or look for an enchanted forest? Volunteering to assist with our classes during **Summer Super Science** is a great way to learn and have fun on the trail. Assist with nature-themed adventures such as *Creature Sleuths*, *A Pirate's Life for Me* or *Diary of a Bug*.

If you can spend some of your time during the week this summer helping our contract instructors, staff and students, please contact Susan at 570-4885 for more information.

## A Fond Farwell

It is with sadness that we announce that our dear friend, Alex Lipski, recently passed on. Alex was a regular on the trail and could always be counted on for a hearty greeting and a flash of his infectious smile. He and his wife Mia have been generous supporters of the Nature Center in many ways and a vital part of our community. Our hearts and love are with Alex's family.

# VOLUNTEER NEWS

## Appreciating Our Volunteer Resource

As one of our most cherished resources, Nature Center volunteers have been busy helping with a wide variety of activities and programs this year. Our volunteers provide education, outreach, customer service, and maintenance help, not to mention lots of important knowledge, wonderful smiles and warmth.

## Trail Stewards

Thank you to all the *Trail Stewards* who spend their time helping patrons on the trail. *Trail Stewards* provide Nature Center visitors with a level of customer service we would not be able to achieve without them. For instance, Lee Warren comes to the Center almost every evening near closing time to lock the South Lake bathroom. And, Steve Witt recently helped a patron recover her lost wallet full of cash and credit cards, taking the time to come back to the Nature Center parking lot later in the evening to return it to her. What great examples of customer service. But, of course, the list of ways each of our *Trail Stewards* are helpful to the Nature Center goes on... being its eyes and ears, reporting damaged portions of the trail and providing information and a sense of security to the public. Thank you to the following volunteers for your dedicated service: **Theresa Alletto, Dee Barnard, Judith and Jeremy Blatchford, Roger Boswell, Diana Chang, Linda Christensen, Linda Diaz, Dorothy Geisler, Sharon Hess, Nancy Kimes, Al Kimura, Steve Liivoja, Craig Matheny, Steve McCord, Laura and Adam Morales, Damon Nixon, Gloria Potocki, Lou Schumow, and Frances Tomich.**

## Sharing Nature in the City

Our *Sharing Nature in the City* Program has experienced an influx of new volunteers, since we finished a two-day training program in March. Enthusiastic new members of the team were treated to sense of place education, open-ended questioning techniques, role playing at the insect, bird, welcome and mammals tables, as well as training by staff and experienced volunteers. Welcome to all our new *SNIC* volunteers (see photo).



### New Trail Stewards:

**L to R, Front: Danny Calalu, Mary Esposito, Joan Cistaro, Linda Diaz, Sonia Rodriguez, and Craig Smith. Back: Gail Campbell, Chris Becck, Quebin DeGuzman, Sharmon Voltmer, Jim Rupp, Melani Smith, and Francine Curtis.**

In addition, many of our long-time *SNIC* volunteers have been on the trail as well as attending a host of community fairs throughout the region. This is an important function of our *SNIC* group. The Nature Center receives so many requests to attend environmental, scout, and education related events, it's impossible for us to attend the majority of them. But our wonderful volunteers are able to go and present interesting hands-on education about nature, sustainability and stewardship. Our attendance at these events is always very popular and enables us to bring the wonders of nature and the need for its care to a larger number of people.

Thank you to **Lu and John Bowden, Ann Cantrell, Thais Edmonds, Ray Ramos, Ron Seivers, Lou Shumow,**

**Mary Stebbins, Hank Warzybok, Maria Zawacki** for their loyal participation in *Sharing Nature in the City*.

## Moveable Museum

Our *Moveable Museum* volunteers continue to reach out to the community with presentations in schools throughout Long Beach of *Protect Our Watery World*, which focuses on marine life and the effect of pollution, and *Acorns Sea and Sage* which brings the life of the Tongva Indians to life in the classroom. Many thanks to **Lou Schumow** and **Ray Ramos** for their many hours of service to the program. Also, thank you to **Mary Stebbins, Dorothy Geisler** and **Ann Cantrell** for their dedication.

## Goodbye to a Friend

In January, El Dorado Nature lost an old and dear friend when Peter Tackney died. As many of you know, Peter preceded most of us in our involvement, love and defense of the Nature Center. He founded and coordinated the annual Christmas Bird Count for our Audubon chapter. He served on the Advisory Board for the Nature Center in the late 80s and taught me everything he knew about the Center and the politics of the City. He was ethical, honest and deeply loved the land. In his counsel with me, I could always count on him to speak for the best interests of this place we all love. Whether it was because of his lobbying for the construction of an osprey nesting platform on the north side of the south lake, or his sighting of fledging great horned owls in the big eucalyptus at the end of the two mile trail, I was always filled with love and joy when Peter Tackney waved to me through the window and bounded in to tell me his latest sighting or well thought out idea. I feel sure that his family would be honored if folks made a donation in Peter's honor to *Friends* so that a tree might be planted in his memory.

— Mary Blackburn



## El Dorado Nature Center

***Thank you to all those who have contributed since September 2008.***

***Your generous donations help to make El Dorado Nature Center  
a place for education and recreation like no other!***

### **RED SHOULDERED HAWK**

Alex & Mia Lipski

### **RED EARED SLIDER**

Dorothy Abrahamse  
Mike Beckage  
Vincent Beck Jr.  
Grace Earl  
Tommy Fowler  
Elena Holcomb  
Lawrence Edgar & Family  
Eileen Klink  
Caroline Klund  
Herbert Lundblad  
Janet Marsh  
Russ & Kathy Parsons  
Robert Ruderman  
Louis & Norma Schumow  
Jo Ann Smith  
Melanie Smith

### **BUTTERFLY**

Linnea Booker  
Peggy Brutsche  
Linda Bryan-Thompson  
Harold & Noreta Drab  
Lisa Rinaldi  
Mary Mimzy Tackney-Moen  
Helen Thaler  
Barbara Van Alstine  
Tina Vince  
Douglas Whiting  
Steve & Pat Witt  
Terri Zwick & Wes Bryan

### **ACORN**

Lance Anderson  
Becky Bass  
Sue Beeney  
Patricia Benoit  
Gregory & Jacqueline  
Betraun  
Faith Cardoza  
Tom & Lynda Capel  
Alan Coles  
Linda Diaz  
Diane Estes

Larry & Denise Ginn  
Nancy Hagthorp  
Kathy Hanson  
Eleanor Harder  
Jessica Hill  
Mary Holzgang  
Susan Klebl  
Sue Lemmerman  
Steven Liivoja  
Kerry Martin  
Craig Matheny

Pat Molle  
Willellyn McFarland  
Tobi Neer  
Mark Nitikman  
Sonia Pawluczyk  
Patricia Reed  
Nancy Risch  
Bob Seabovrn  
Chris Schulberg  
John Sinclair  
Bill Twombly



### **SUSTAINING SUPPORTERS**

Alex & Mia Lipski  
Anne Cantrell

Robert Ruderman  
Bill Viola



Help enhance the habitat and the excellent educational programs you love by renewing your membership in *Friends of El Dorado Nature Center* today. Your support is essential. Make a difference in your community by joining today!  
For more information (562) 570-4935



# Spring Fling

It's that time again! Join us at the Nature Center for a delightful Spring Fling, otherwise known as the Volunteer Potluck. Come renew your spirits with a little fine dining by the lake and refreshing companionship with those who share your love of nature. It's your time to be lavished with appreciation. Come on Tuesday, June 2 at 6 pm; bring your own place setting and a dish to share. See you there!



# El Dorado Audubon Society Celebrates 40 Years



On a fortuitous day in the late 1960s, local veterinarian Charles W. Jenner, D.V.M., passed by a new building on Spring Street with a sign posted explaining that a Nature Center was in development there. Interested, Charles stopped by and met Phil Peterson, the Nature Center's first Director. They talked for a bit about the new Center and eventually came to discuss how a community support group could be formed. The rest is history. That meeting led to the founding of El Dorado Audubon Society in 1969 with Charles Jenner serving as its first president.

Right from the beginning, the Chapter began leading docent programs for the Nature Center. Forty years later, their commitment to raising awareness about native birds, wildlife and their habitats is still going strong. As the Nature Center has grown, so has the chapter. Along with their monthly general meetings, El Dorado

Audubon hosts bird walks, field trips and special events throughout the area. They work with local schools and other community organizations to educate others on the importance of birds and have supported and driven conservation efforts throughout the surrounding region.

For many, El Dorado Audubon Society has helped foster a love and appreciation of birds and wildlife. They are an exceptional resource with strong ties to the land and the community. Their demonstration of what a dedicated and determined group of volunteers can accomplish is inspiring. On behalf of the Nature Center, we would like to thank El Dorado Audubon Society for its support-- past, present and future.

A 40th anniversary celebration is planned for June 18th. For information about the celebration and more information on El Dorado Audubon Society, please pick up a newsletter in the Nature Center's museum or visit their website, [www.eldoradoaudubon.org](http://www.eldoradoaudubon.org).

**On the Trail**  
El Dorado Nature Center  
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